Students’ perception of the library as a hospitable environment for reading, studying and research at University of Zululand

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Aims and Objectives
- Research Methodology
- Research Findings
- Conclusion
- Recommendations
Introduction

- Statement of the problem:
  - Mission of University of Zululand Library
  - The extent of library use by students
  - Interaction of students with the library services
Investigate the library hospitalility according to the perspective of the user (Cook and Heath 2001:2).

Quality of information resources determines the hospitalility of the academic library (Oh 2004).
Aims of the study

To investigate:

- whether the students of University of Zululand perceive the library as a hospitable environment for studying, reading and conducting research.

- the behaviour of students towards utilization of academic library services and the extent at which they use such services to satisfy their information needs.
Objectives

- To observe:
  - the library environment, services and resources in terms of its hospitality for student utilisation.
  - the attitudes of students towards the available library services.
  - Students’ confidence in accessing library services and facilities
- To establish perceptions of students in relying on the library for the satisfaction their information needs.
- To determine the challenges faced by students in the library environment.
Research Methodology

- Mixed methods research.
- Research Instruments:
  - Questionnaires;
  - Focus group discussions;
  - Observation; and
  - Interviews.
- Convenience; and Purposive sampling
- Target Population:
  - Students and Information Librarians
User population

Figure 1: Library use
Figure 2: Purpose of library use

- Studying: 88%
- Research: 11%
- Reading: 1%
## Library hospitality

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library hospitality in terms of service and environment</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Yes (Percentage)</th>
<th>No (Percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable reading or studying in the library</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30 (56.6%)</td>
<td>23 (43.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with the current library environment</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27 (51%)</td>
<td>26 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to locate needed library books</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>28 (52.8%)</td>
<td>25 (47.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students’ experiences of using the library

- Challenges:
  - Noise
  - Space
  - Unmonitored lights and exposed electric cables
  - Computer illiteracy
  - Misallocation of books by other students
  - Outdated, and unavailability of required materials
Making the academic library a hospitable environment for students

- Challenges:
  - Minimal participation of students
  - Inadequate computer skills in first year students
  - Staffing problems
  - High noise levels
  - Damaging of Library materials, including furniture
Conclusion

- Students perceive the University of Zululand library as inhospitable.
- Noise in the library is the main challenge.
- There is minimal user-involvement with library services.
- Assignments do not challenge the students to actively use the library services.
Recommendations

- Library marketing
- Effective communication between faculty members and the library.
- Provide relevant materials.
- Involvement of faculty members in encouraging library use.
- Timely attendance to users’ complaints
- Monitoring of noise.
- Employ more qualified staff.
Thank You!
Enkosi